View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk
brought to you by CORE
provided by OpenSIUC

LIBRARY CHICAGO

The Open Court.

A WEEKLY JOURNAL

Devoted to the Work of Conciliating Religion with Science.

No. 224. (Vol. V.—42.) CHICAGO, DECEMBER 10, 1891. Two Dollars per Year. Single Copies, 5 Cts.

THE UNIVERSAL AND THE PARTICULAR.

BY DR. R. N. FOSTER.

In *The Open Court* for Oct. 22 there occurs, as part of a continuous discussion, the following sentences (p. 2995):

"Indeed all things, (ourselves included) are such as they are only in connection with the whole universe. Every single object is inseparable from the whole cosmos, and if we speak of a thing we separate it in our thought from the rest of the world. This separation however is a fiction, which if persisted in leads us to the absurd idea of things in themselves.

"The whole universe is a vast system of relations, and these relations are reality itself. There is nothing unconditioned, nothing unrelated, nothing absolute. Everything real is, and necessarily must be, relative. A correct description of the relations of reality in the mind of a feeling being is knowledge. To say that we can know the relative, but cannot know the absolute or the unconditioned, is equivalent to saying that we can know that which exists but we can never know that which does not exist."

The fundamental idea here set forth is one which was also expressed in the last number of *The Monist*, and we do not hesitate to say that it is the most important and comprehensive thought of all philosophy. And it is therefore of the utmost importance that it should be carefully thought out and thoroughly explicated. The correlation of forces and the conservation of energy are laws of great and universal import, but they have no such exhaustive significance or such far reaching consequences as the preliminary law of the relation between the universal and the particular, and the antecedent fact that all existences are grouped in the order of a universal and its particulars. The doctrine lacks not abundance of evidences. Every whole and its parts, a world, a man, or an apple, or anything, is but a repetition or image of the universal and the particular in a new form.

Nearly three thousand years ago this problem showed itself in Greek philosophy, although it had been, latent or expressed, the very axis of theosophy and religion ages before. Indeed religion is the recognition of this law of being as the relation subsisting between man as the particular and God as the universal. In Plato and Aristotle it received full recognition, and so likewise through the Neo-Platonists and the Scholastics its study was continued, and likewise in the modern philosophy of Leibnitz, Hegel, and others. No great thinker has failed to do it reverence. And yet at the present day, so concentrated is mental activity upon questions quite subordinate, that this primal question is almost entirely neglected, or worse still, is ignorantly estimated as so much antiquated philosophical rubbish.

Yet it is not difficult to discern the universality of the idea in question. Thought itself is a universal which exists in its particulars. Fix the attention upon particular thoughts exclusively, that is to say by abstracting them from the universal, and the universal disappears. On fixing our attention upon the universal in like manner, the particulars disappear. They do not disappear into nothing. Each vanishes into the other. An example of the correlation of intellectual forces. They exist nevertheless as actual being in indissoluble union. The human body is a universal, in which the parts are the individual cells, or even more minute subdivision may be made if we choose. Each cell lives only in and from and for the whole body, even while it lives also for itself. And the whole body lives only in all of its parts, while also living for itself. Or again the physiological cell is a whole existing only in its parts. And so on infinitely. No division is so small or can be that it will not submit to this analysis. We may try to pause at a supposed indivisible atom. But that is only, as one of your correspondents aptly phrases a similar movement, because we elect to "cease thinking" when we have reached that point. The truth is, the finite will vanish into the infinite, resist as we may—if not into the infinitely great, then into the infinitely small, and these exist indissolubly.

As metaphysicians, Lotze and Bowne, among others, have done justice to this mode of thinking the universe. It is inevitable, and it is the cure for the barrenness of all thinking that pauses in mere abstractions.

Of course from the very nature of the subject the existence of universals has been often denied. But this arises exclusively from the abstractions in which thought must employ itself in order to reach the particular. Abstracting thought, thought temporarily arresting its own process, is what creates "isolates," or makes particulars. But trying to grasp the entire process, it is the particular that must be denied as self-existent, and the universal that we are compelled to assume.

The truth must be that each new movement or each new thing is but another phase of the whole. There exists no other form of actuality whatever. Kant's "thing-in-itself" was and is the universal, but Kant did not so recognise it. Herbert Spencer's Unknowable is the universal—the abstract universal—the universal without particulars—which has no existence. His unknowable energy exists however in all particular energies, and all particular energies subsist in it. In knowing the particular energies we are knowing the universal energy, for they are the outcome and revealment of the universal. It is a contradiction of all being to say otherwise. The universal and the so-called unknowable is the one only actual known in all particular knowing. That or nothing. Indeed many from Pyrrho to this day affirm the latter statement, even to the extent of declaring that we cannot even know that we know nothing. Quite different is the dictum that knowing itself is a phase of universal being, which indeed exists only as and in knowing.

But now this much talked of Universal must be reached by adequate thought. Otherwise our universal will be but a larger particular, and another miserable abstraction. Our universal must be conceived concretely, abstractly, unitedly, and quite universally. It is not the universal of time, which can give us but an indefinite succession of moments past and future. Our universal must not be temporal but eternal —otherwise it contradicts itself. The true universal may appear in the particulars of time moments to finite thought, but is not actually so. A moment's thought will show us this. For the Past time is past, and is not. The Future has not come, and is not. The present is—not an infinitesimal of time between the past and the future—but the timeless actuality that lies eternally between these two. Its eternity here emerges at once. Time has vanished, not into nothing however, but into eternal and universal being. The true universal is that timeless actuality, which nevertheless gives origin to the time thought in a mind that advances towards it from particulars. This universal is not a somewhat abstracted from and "set over against" the universe of particulars. It is the universal *and* its particulars each of which exists only in the other. This union of the two is what constitutes the particular as a real, and not a delusion or vain show. The "thing-in itself" is a delusion and an impossibility. The thing in the universal is the real.

Moreover the true Universal is ideal as well as real; potential as well as actual; temporal as well as eternal. It is the veritable all in all "ourselves included"—all thinking of it and all consciousness of it being itself displayed to itself in its infinite variety.

It was the abstract universal that led to the scholastic disputes as to whether the universal was *ante rem, in re*, or *post rem*. The true universal is the *res* itself in its fulness and entirety. Of course it transcends finite and particular thought—but not the thought which is infinite and universal.

But now this actual universal is neither disputable nor dubitable. Neither can we say of it as is said in the quotation made near the beginning of this article, that it is a "vast system of relations" only, and that "these relations are reality itself." These "relations" are relations merely; reality is the universal itself, which includes relations, and more too. To have relations we must have a series of related somewhats. To consider the Universal as Unity, as a One, would give us no relation except that of Identity. In a duality, still more in a plurality, and therein only, is relation possible. But the true and universal unity implicitly and explicitly contains plurality. Between and among the plural particulars there is possible and actual relation—we have relativity. But in the one only universal there is only one identity, and not relativity. That is to say the whole is unconditioned, without possible relation, and therefore absolute. This contradicts the statement previously quoted that "there is nothing unrelated, nothing absolute," and that "everything real is, and necessarily must be, relative." All particulars fall of necessity under the category of the relative. But the universal as necessarily falls under that of the absolute. And in so considering them thought is complete and symmetrical.

Still more untenable seems the further statement that "to say that we can know the relative, but cannot know the absolute, is equivalent to saying that we can know that which exists, but we can never know that which does not exist."

This is not only in contradiction to the previous statement that every single object is inseparable from the whole cosmos, which means that there is a whole Cosmos, but it is equivalent to affirming that the various parts of a whole apple do exist as a system of relations, but the whole apple has no existence at all. An apple is just as good an illustration as any other thing, as a world, for instance. Let us suppose that one apple is all that is—that it is the totality of being. Then obviously the whole apple is our universal. It exists as a unit, and as a whole, and as such it is absolute. It has no other being to which it can relate. It stands related only to Nothing, and that is incapable of relation, if we may use such language. The apple as a whole exists in and for itself. But it contains a plurality in which it also exists. It lives in all its particular parts, and each part lives in the whole, although at the same moment both the whole and each part live for and in themselves. The relation is subtle, but is an obvious matter of fact. It is impossible to abolish the universal, the absolute, the uncondi-

tioned. It is, and it is eternal. The kernel of the whole matter is involved in the expression, "the whole universe is a vast system of relations." In this expression the particulars are clearly thought as "relations"; but the universal is involved in the word "system." To what is the system related? Here we are apt to be ensnared by the suggestion that it is related to the particulars. But the particulars are included in the system. The system is the relations, and something more. It is the organic unity of all the relations or of all the related particulars, in such manner that it is an independent whole in and for itself as a whole. One ought to apologise for so much repetition, were it not that the failure to clearly think out the Universal is the vice and emptiness of much that passes for modern philosophy. The search for reality in the particular alone leads to endless attempts at formulating which end in various platitudes. Such for instance, as the dogma that only the individual exists. Or the attempt to explicate Life as the "continuous adjustment of internal to external relations." Or the reduction of all Logic, to the principle of Identity. Or the construction of a solid by beginning with a point; stringing together a lot of points without dimension until they form a line; adding line to line, each without breadth, until they make a surface; and compacting surfaces without thickness until they form a solid. Or again, constructing the world of living organisms from chemical elements, or from the simplest forms—that huge hysteron-proteron called Evolution. In this process the architect forgets that there are universals which never develop, and never evolve, and were never made. Because he acquired the addition table successively, unit by unit, he supposes it to have heen so "evolved" in actual being, whereas the mathematical relations are eternal realities, that were true before any man thought them, if there ever was such a time, and would be true if all thinking were to cease. Mathematics too is a "vast system of relations," and just one of the phases of the universal, which however is more than mathematics.

So also with the evolution of particular forms of organic being. Universal being is eternally organic. It never *became* so. It simply is and was so. The particular may become and cease—but not the universal. The particular may unfold from ovum to adult, *after* it has first unfolded from adult to ovum, but we know of no other process by which this change is wrought. And if we ever lose the connection of events in the vain pursuit of the particular, we shall find the thread again in the Universal. The particular organism may grow bigger from day to day, but if so, something else must grow smaller in precise proportion; for the equilibrium of universal relativity is never disturbed. But the whole does not grow bigger or smaller. It needs no microscope to discern here the line between the particular and the universal—between the relative and the absolute—between that which undergoes change or evolution, and that which cannot. And we must not yet forget that the two are indissoluble. That changing particular is a movement of a whole which does not change—that growing organism is an evolution from and of that which never grows. And it is the latter which truly IS.

Here we reach the ground of old philosophic and still older religious thought. Here we find the God of antiquity and of all ages. He is the universal, the unchangeable, the eternal Being; the Universal All in all particulars. Here lies the ground of a real difference between religion and philosophy on one hand and mere science on the other. Here also lies their reconciliation. For we see where the doctrine of the particular ends and that of the universal begins.

For it is by applying to one of these concepts the categories that belong only to the other that confusion and error arise. For example, the process of evolution cannot be pronounced necessary and eternal. If that is true, then we may assert that the mathematics of all spatial existence are an evolution and not the eternal truth of eternal being. We can say not that twice two is, was, and will be four, but that twice two has grown to be four, and heaven alone knows how much more it may grow to be in the fullness of time! Is it not clear enough, on the contrary, that the universal, spatially manifest, is intrinsically mathematical, and as unalterable as eternity?

In like manner considered in relation to thought, the universal is all Logic. This, and not the particular doctrine of identity, is the real ground of Logic. The particular proposition of identity gives us nothing but the empty formula $a=a$, over and over again. But logic, the logic of universal being, gives us the whole of being as a universal, and all its particulars, as a "vast system" of logical "relations," in which not only identity, but also difference, change, contradiction, relativity, absoluteness—the WHOLE again appears in logical formulæ. Logic is not a particular, but a universal.

This we approach in reverse order, it is true. But this is only another way of saying that it approaches us in reverse order. Thus it actually is both ways—both inductively and deductively.

Again it is the solid which gives us at once surface, line and point. We can deduce them as necessary from the solid. We cannot deduce the solid from them. The solid is prior. And the solid ground of logic is also *a priori*. It is the logical universe. The finite has no other ground than the infinite.

Schopenhauer would view the Universal as Will; Hegel as Reason; Spencer as Energy unknowable; Plato as an eternal Idea; Democritus as a chaos of

clashing atoms; and Philo or Paul or St. Augustine as the living God; and so on. But no one of these, except Mr. Spencer, failed to seize the thought of the universal and eternal, or attempted to deduce them by a process of evolution from transient phases of themselves. On the contrary, all evolution, or creation, or becoming, was with them a continuous manifestation or revelation of that which eternally was. The particular of to-day is not that of yesterday. It has changed. The universal of to day *is* that of yesterday without change, only with a new manifestation of itself.

Again we find an attempt to define Life by one of its particular moments or phases, viz. adjustment of internals to externals. But the universal life means infinitely more than "adjustment." A river or a haystack complies as fully with such a definition as does any other object. All particulars, dead or alive, are incessantly employed in adjusting their relations, internal, external, and eternal. Life is the living universe. You cannot explain it in narrower terms. Each living organism is this same universal repeated. To tear an object from its universal setting is to destroy it. Therefore all abstraction tends to nihilism, unless held in strict relation to the universal. When so held abstracting is true thinking. Otherwise thought itself becomes an abstraction. Philosophy is not abstract thought, it is the Universal appearing as Plato and the rest. Religion is not abstract theosophy. It is God, the Universal, appearing as Christ, angel, Buddha, or a simple pious man or woman. Neither is it necessary to follow *The Monist* or Professor Fiske to the abode of an impersonal vagueness called God by philosophic courtesy. For the Universal makes Personality its supreme expression, to which all else is subordinated. An impersonal God is the Unknowable resuscitated under still another name.

We know of no such abstraction. We know the Universal in the particular, we know the particular in the universal; and thus we know God in man and man in God, and both as Personal.

In conclusion, any principle that presumes to define itself most perfectly in terms of the particular is a foregone failure. Only that which is grounded in the universal has validity and fullness. The particular principle, like the point in Geometry, the atom in physics, $a=a$ in Logic, evolution in biology, are mere nothings unless constantly related to that universal in and through which they perpetually are. Evolution reaches no universal. If evolution is truly universal, then every thing has been evolved. But if so, from what? The answer is not impossible. All Being is evolved from All Being. There is no alternative. But is this evolution in any true sense of that word! Not only Darwin failed to be a consistent evolutionist, when he postulated a creator to breathe life into his few primordial forms, but all evolutionists are in the same condemnation when they postulate any primitive being whatever which was not evolved from a preceding. Thus the system is lost in the infinite regress. *The Monist* boldly leaps one chasm with the averment that there is no difficulty in obtaining living organisms from inorganic matter, for we see it done every day. We do not see it done any day, nor has any one ever seen, what this is intended to favor, viz. the transformation of inorganic into organic being, except when a previous living organism is given to effect the transformation. This world-wide phenomenon, if it proves anything, proves that living organisms arise only from living organisms. In all such utterances the original and greater principle is naïvely forgotten, that every movement of the particular is at the same time a movement of the universal.

SCIENCE AND IMMORTALITY.

From an article in the Christmas *Century* by Professor Du Bois of Yale, on "Science and Immortality" we quote as follows:

"Mastery of self can be attained only in a world where temptation and sin are possible, where voluntary disobedience is the outcome of ignorant transgression. These are necessary to the end; not merely allowed, but designed. The purpose of such a world is plain to read. It means that not happiness here is the end for which we are to strive. That is a means to help us, to encourage us, to lead us on. Not the avoidance of pain is the end. That also is a means to warn us, to guide us, if needs be, to compel us. But the great end which science itself is forced to recognise is the mastery of self through the struggle with sin and temptation, and the formation of a personality—of a character self-attained, of a spiritual influence in the midst of a universe governed by such influences which, disciplined by pain and trial, strengthened by the sweet uses of adversity, guided by reason and knowledge, voluntarily brought into accord with supreme will through the stress of sin itself—is thus made capable of coöperation with that will both here and hereafter. This is the significance of the process we observe. This alone harmonises all the facts. For such a personality there must be a future. Such a personality belongs to the meaning of the universe. Not, therefore, the production of automatons who may pass a few years of blissful irresponsible ease and then cease to be; nor the development from lower forms of an animal who can for a time explore nature, increase in power and civilisation, develop a higher nature, stretch forth hands of entreaty to an unseen God, and then, just as the universe opens to his gaze, when higher possibilities and hopes and yearnings begin to dawn, when he has grown completely out of his physical environment, and with an endowment far beyond his needs catches glimpses of glories he can never share, and with heart filled with loving longings that can never be satisfied, sinks into a hopeless grave—such is not the end indicated by the facts. Such an end is worse than futile. It is a cruel mockery.

"But the development of a conscious, indefeasible personality, 'One soul against the flesh of all mankind,' of a spiritual energy in accord with eternal purpose, capable of coöperation and fit tool for higher things—this is an end which alone satisfies reason, science, revelation, faith, and hope. This alone is commensurate with the whole mighty process. The attainment of such a

personality we begin here. So surely as we begin it has our true life begun, and opportunity must be afforded to complete the work—else is the whole process a failure. And this personality, science tells us as certainly as she can tell us anything, is not born to die."

We agree with Professor Du Bois that life can only be explained when considered as immortal. Man's ethics point beyond the grave. Yet for that reason we need not conceive of an immortality as an existence in some heaven outside of this world. 'The beyond the grave' is here in this world. Not that some future generations are to live in a state of perfect happiness, for future generations will also have to work for a further progress. The value of life does not lie at all in happiness, but happiness lies in the making life valuable by working for progress, by living for immortality, for the life beyond the grave.

Some say life ends with death, or at least our life will end with death. This is the main error based upon the dualism of thinking that we possess a separate existence apart from the world. As our schooldays live on in our life and remain a living presence with us in their individual particularities, so our life and the most personal and characteristic features of our soul become living building-stones in that revelation of mind which we call humanity. This is no mere dissolution in the All, but a preservation of our very personality.

Professor Du Bois proposes as one objection of science to immortality that "to begin implies to end." Professor Du Bois would perhaps be inclined to adopt the monistic view of immortality, if he took into consideration the answer of science given to the question of the origin of the soul. The soul did not originate out of nothing, nor does it dissolve into nothing. Whenever parent, teachers, or friends impart to us a truth, they hand over to us part of their souls. The soul originates in the dim past of days long gone by, and, like the Eleusinian torch, it is handed down to future generations. While men die, their souls live on.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE UNIVERSAL.

THE Directors of the Columbian World's Fair have made arrangements to have in addition to the exhibitions of industry and art, some representation of philosophy, religion, the sciences, and the aspirations to social reform. The ways and means of an exhibition of ideal pursuits are not as yet clearly understood, but the good-will of men willing to think of such ways and means and able to devote time to their execution is busily at work. Dr. Foster, the author of the article in the present number, is one among them. He is president of the philosophical section of the World's Fair Auxiliary.

Dr. Foster is greatly interested in philosophy, and he has shown his interest by keeping a philosophical club alive in Chicago, under the name of the "Aristotelian Society" which is frequented not only by Chicago thinkers interested in "the Universal" among whom may be mentioned Professor Block, but also by such non-residents as the Professors Davidson, Snyder, and others. The direction in which the interests of the "Aristotelian Society" aspire is faithfully characterised by Dr. Foster's article of this number.

Concerning the Universal, as it is understood by Dr. Foster, we must confess that for expressing analogous ideas we should prefer other words. The universal, as we conceive it, is any most general term of its kind. The universal "horse" is a name which comprises all the common qualities that are found in all horses. The universal in this way is an abstract. We should not say that it is "a miserable abstract" only, for abstracts are important thought-symbols and they are not meaningless: they possess representative value; there are certain features of reality represented by the universal.

The problem of the universal was the main object of philosophy among the schoolmen. The extreme Nominalists were wrong when they said that universals are mere products of the mind, mere *flatus vocis*, as if they had been made arbitrarily, and there were no correspondent objective reality. But their opponents the extreme Realists were wrong also when they maintained that universals existed by themselves independent of their particulars.

Dr. Foster's view of the universal is widely different from ours. Our universal is a logical term, being that term which is of universal application. His universal comprehends many qualities which ordinarily exclude one another; it is temporal as well as eternal; it is universal as well as particular; it is the All, it is God, and this God is conceived as being personal.

We recognise fully the importance of the deductive and universal application of certain truths, but we no longer consider the universality of such truths as mystical. We consider the problem of the universal as solved and thus we have outgrown the interest that the schoolmen attached to the idea of the universal.

* * *

I have to add a few words in answer to some passages in Dr. Foster's article. First concerning evolution. The All-being has not evolved, but the things in the All-being have evolved, viz. they have been transformed from other things. Mr. Charles S. Peirce in *The Monist*, Vol. I, No. 2, made the proposition, that not only things but also the formal order of the world and its rigidity had been evolved. Necessity and natural law itself thus would be the product of evolution. This thesis, however, was attacked in the same number by the editor of *The Monist* in his article "The Criterion of Truth," which considers law as eternal and evolution as a transformation in conformity to the nature of existence, which we formulate as so-called "natural laws."

That in plants non-organised matter, carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, etc., is changed into organised matter is a fact which constantly takes place before our eyes. A special organism is needed to produce the special structure of that organism and we have not yet succeeded in making in a chemist's retort that simplest kind of organised substance which has been the starting-point of evolution on earth. But what of that in the face of the fact that animate and inanimate bodies consist of the same substance which of course cannot be absolutely dead matter. There is no other difference between animate and inanimate bodies than that the former are organised, the latter are not. The difference is a matter of form, of combination, of relation.

When I said in a former article of mine "the whole universe is a vast system of relations" I purposely intended to exclude the idea that there are "related somewhats." The conception of "related somewhats," as if there were unknown things and in addition relations between these unknown things leads, to the proposition of things in themselves. Reality does not consist of such somewhats with relations between them. These so-called "somewhats" and "the relations" are one thing, they are inseparable; they are separable in thought only and when separated in thought, they are called abstracts. Reality is no compound of absolute

objects knitted together by the glue of relations, reality is effectiveness, it is the working of cause and effect; reality is *Wirklichkeit*, as the Germans so properly express it; and the action of taking effect (the *Wirklichkeit*) is nothing more or less than a relation. Think of an absolute existence which would produce no effect and thus have no relation whatever, could it be said to be real? Certainly, it could not be called *Wirklichkeit*. The relation of cause and effect, i. e. the act of producing effects alone is reality. Unrelated absolute existence would be tantamount to absolute non-existence. P. C.

CURRENT TOPICS.

Like a drink of bitters before breakfast, in its appetising qualities, is the contest for the Speakership of the "House" on the eve of a Presidential election. In the present Congress the democrats are nearly suffocated by a majority too big for their statesmanship; and they would give a large reward for a Speaker able to hold that majority in hand; for example, a democratic Thomas Reed. At the present moment, viewing the battle from the vantage ground of Illinois, Mr. Springer is an easy winner, and the only question is as to the size of his majority; the other candidates are just clinging to the fringe of the caucus. I learn that Mr. Springer's forces are the most "aggressive"; and I can readily believe it, for they work twenty-four hours a day, and seven days a week. They do not support the Sunday closing movement; in fact, Sunday is their busy day, for it appears by the dispatches that, "The Springer headquarters have been open all Sunday"; although it is added by way of apology, that they were kept open "more as a haven for incoming Congressmen than as a political camp." This generosity ought to win votes from those poor Congressmen, who like tramps at a police station on a cold night, having no other shelter, found a "haven" at the Springer headquarters. It is incredible that this kindly hospitality was used by rival candidates as a club for Mr. Springer's head; but such is the depravity of statesmen that I am not surprised to learn that "Messrs. Mills and McMillan are trying to make a little capital out of the fact that their respective headquarters have been closed on Sunday." This may be after the manner of the Scribes and Pharisees, but it is very likely that Messrs. Mills and McMillan *will* make a little capital out of that sacrifice; and make it at the expense of Mr. Springer.

* * *

As it was in the struggle for the national republican convention, so it is in the canvass for the speakership, the "Nor'west" is determined to have it, if there is any virtue in an "aggressive" contest for it. Those of us who saw the gentle football game in Chicago on Thanksgiving day, will rejoice to know that the following proclamation has been issued from the Springer headquarters; "From this time on the '*North-West*' will be the watchword of the Springer forces." It ought to be, and I hope the incoming Congressmen from the effete "East" will appreciate the following example of our North-West manners: "The tactics of the Illinois men are thoroughly aggressive. Some of the candidates wait for members to come and see them. Springer's forces do not wait. They go to them. Committees watch the trains and take charge of congressional gripsacks as soon as they emerge from the cars" This is purely amateur work, and the supposition that the "Illinois men" have all been hotel runners is erroneous. Nearly all those "incoming congressmen" will get their gripsacks again, although from the manner of seizing them, they may have some doubts about it; but that is merely our playful North-West way. We have learned also in the North-West, that although "the office ought to seek the man," it never does it; and that the best way to get an office is to waylay it, and sandbag it, and kidnap it immediately on the arrival of the train.

A few weeks ago I called attention to a benevolent society known as the "Band of Mercy," founded for the encouragement of kindness to animals, and especially to birds, whose innocence and beauty appeal to sympathy. Thousands of children belong to the society, and its influence upon them is good. It is gratifying to see that a "Band of Mercy" was organised in Chicago on the 29th of November, and that boys and girls from sixty schools took the pledge of kindness, and were each of them presented with a star, the badge of the order. A lecture on birds was given by a lady, and the sin of killing them was pathetically shown. The very same paper that contained this information antagonised its moral by reminding the boys that the law giving two cents a head for dead sparrows would go into effect on the First day of December; and the bad character of the sparrows was made the pretext for their destruction. Between pledge and bribe the dilemma of a Chicago boy will be a painful one. With the badge on his breast and the two cents in his pocket he will feel very uncomfortable. Perhaps, however, the sparrow is not within the sphere of mercy. According to the paper I spoke of, he needs killing, as a disreputable fellow. I do not know whether the charges made against him are true or not; but I think they are, for I can believe anything bad of a being endowed with wings who prefers to live in the smoke and mud of a great city, when by twenty minutes healthy exercise he may luxuriate in the beautiful woods and fields. That he can be so recreant is an example of inverse evolution that requires the genius of some new Darwin to explain. I am amazed at such degeneracy, as Charles Dickens was amazed when moralising on the shiftless depravity of London chickens, he wondered how anything born of an egg, and having wings, could hop down a ladder into a cellar at night and call *that* going home. I would be glad to have the opinion of the "Band of Mercy" as to the ethical value of a law that bribes children to kill birds.

* * *

They have a society in England something like the "Band of Mercy" in America; although apparently with a more definite object. It is called the "Society for the Protection of Birds." It already contains 10,000 members, and its President is the Duchess of Portland. Among its rules is this; "Lady members shall refrain from wearing the feathers of any birds not killed for food, *the ostrich only excepted.*" Can anything be more lady-like than that exception? There is a charming candor about it that men very seldom show. I once heard an "Anti-Monopoly" partisan declare that he was opposed to every monopoly except his own; but this avowal was made in private conversation. He would never have had the frankness to put it in the "platform" of his party. The Duchess of Portland, and the lady members of the "Society for the Protection of Birds" are honest enough to say, "The feathers that we do not care for, we will abandon, out of mercy to the birds, but the feathers of the ostrich we must have." This comes of having a duchess for president. I saw a duchess once, when I was a boy, and on her head majestic was an ostrich plume. I have seen an Indian duchess too, of the Winnebago tribe, and her noble brow was also adorned with feathers in a similar way. The sight of that English duchess made such an impression upon my boyish imagination, that a duchess not adorned with an ostrich plume is to me an impossible ideality, and such appears to be the mental condition of the "lady members" aforesaid. Therefore, out of consideration for the Duchess of Portland, the indispensable ostrich is very properly excluded from the mercies of the "Society for the Protection of Birds."

* * *

A brilliant and brave woman is Miss Kate Field of Washington, whose latest "mission" it is to remove the duty on art. To that end Miss Field has visited Chicago, and obtained the assurance of influential citizens that "Chicago sympathises with her patriotic project." The adjective electrifies us for a moment, be-

cause we have been taught that if there is in this country one supremely "patriotic" blessing it is the tariff, guardian of American genius, and protector of American labor. How, then, can the repeal of it, or of any portion of it, be a "patriotic" scheme? Is it patriotic to leave our painters unprotected against the pauper genius of Rubens, Titian, and Raphael? How can our sculptors compete with the cheap labor of Canova, Phidias, and Michael Angelo? What chance have our musicians if Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven may enter our ports free of duty? And if it is patriotic to abolish the tariff on statuary and paintings, the luxuries of the rich, why is it not equally patriotic to abolish the tariff on clothing, a necessity of the poor? For instance, I have an old friend of the farmer class, a strong partisan republican, who during the reign of Hayes was a member of the United States Senate; and in that reign, the House of Representatives passed a bill abolishing the tariff on works of art. When the bill came up for hearing in the Senate, my old friend tacked on to the clause admitting classic sculptures free of duty, this amendment, "*and also all salt used in the curing of meat.*" His amendment was adopted, and the "old masters" went back to the House of Representatives, literally "in brine." They were then laid on the table; and there they are yet. Will Miss Field explain the "patriotic" difference between the tariff on statues used in fine houses, and the tariff on salt "used in the curing of meat"?

* * *

It is told in the newspapers, quite seriously too, that an American gentleman, representing the "Human Rights League," has gone to Russia with a petition signed by five hundred thousand American citizens, asking better treatment for some of the subjects of the Czar. This is a perilous enterprise, for it may provoke an ironical retort in the shape of a petition from five hundred thousand Russians, begging of our government better treatment for some citizens of the United States. A profound study for political philosophers is the reaction against liberty, which for the past twenty-five years has been stealthily growing in this country, with the passive approval of the American people. It may be that fears for the public safety have compelled us to adopt the methods of arbitrary governments, but that we *have* adopted them will hardly be denied. Torture, for instance, long obsolete in England, is practised freely in Chicago, to compel suspected persons to criminate themselves and others, although, no doubt, it is as violently illegal in Illinois as it is in England Col. Ingersoll in his lecture lately delivered, referred to the instruments of torture still preserved in the Tower of London, as if they were merely historical curiosities; and he spoke of torture itself, as if it were nothing but the spectral memory of a barbarous age gone by. I have no doubt that torture is illegal in Colorado, and yet I see that it is practised there by the officers of the law. A dispatch from Denver, dated Nov. 30th says that some suspected persons just arrested there, proved themselves "dead game, refusing to give up a word of information although barbarously tortured in the sweat box more than once." We have it on the authority of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, that torture, although often practised by the English government, never was legal in England; and it is quite certain that it never was legal in the United States. Some day the American "sweat box" will be put with the English rack and thumb-screw among the relics of barbarism.

M. M. TRUMBULL.

CORRESPONDENCE.

CUSTOM HOUSE CHICANERY.

To the Editor of The Open Court:—

I TRUST you will admit a few lines anent custom house folly in Canada, as well as in the United States. I have felt all the contemptuous indignation that General Trumbull so well expresses, for the mischievous and exasperating folly of the tariff on this Continent. The "baby's jacket" incident I know well; small articles owing their only value to the loving hands that worked them are stopped, and duty levied which has represented the *full value* of the various things in England. Moreover, articles which cannot be made in Canada, and repairs which cannot be executed are mercilessly taxed. A sewing machine which had been eighteen years in wear, was sent from Canada to New York, as the repairs it required *could not be executed in this country.* Before the machine was re-admitted to Canada a heavy duty was charged. There is sometimes a great outcry that the mineral riches of British Columbia remain undeveloped. But who that was not on the spot could imagine this condition of things; that no firm in Canada can produce the class of machinery requisite for reducing British Columbia ores, yet that a heavy duty is levied on mining machinery, so heavy that the ores remain unworked, because it is impossible to import the necessary machinery from England, pay duty and transit dues and work the ores at a profit. Nothing is too trivial to be taxed; sailor's pet canary birds are seized for non-payment of duty; tame monkeys pay their tax. If the articles are necessaries for the "working classes" the excuse is that these intelligent voters (as they are called at the polls) will not stand direct taxation, and can be taxed in no other way. If the articles are not every day necessaries of life, then they are "luxuries of the rich" and are heavily taxed, with the utmost applause. Under which heading does the cruel tax on medicines come?

The one blind idea seems to be to create manufactures, whether they are natural to the country or not; whether they divert labor from vitally necessary objects or not. This idea reigns triumphant in Vancouver; above all things establish manufactures, and the colony will flourish like a green bay tree. Under free trade the great torrent of trade of the British Empire with the East would roll through British Columbia; commerce,—the natural interchange of goods—would bring untold wealth if not one manufacture existed; though as a matter of fact manufactures, as in Venice and Genoa, *follow* commerce. The vital need of this country is development of her material resources; that her corn, her fruit, her minerals, her timber, her fish should be exchanged for the manufactures of the teeming populations of older countries. Labor in the country districts of British Columbia is not to be had; the colony is still so thinly populated that each man hitherto has been able to pre-empt his own quarter section. The greater part of the quarter section consequently remains unimproved, and those who bring capital into the country and desire to develop its resources, would be paralysed but for the Chinese. And this is the state of things in which the great object of Government is to develop manufactories in the towns!

I said the other day to a very shrewd American business man, who had probably never looked at the tariff from a theoretical point of view, "What would Vancouver become if she had free trade?" He said quickly "Why it would be bigger in five years than San Francisco, and this country would be filled in no time from the States." In the mean time the Upas tree of Protection will continue to flourish here; manufactures that are not wanted will be artificially fostered; we shall pay from two hundred to two hundred and fifty per cent. for most of the things we want, (for heavy transit dues must be added to a heavy tariff) and those of us —who do not know what it is to have lived in a free trade country —will feel "protected" and happy. The thing passes my comprehension; how the most ignorant of voters can be persuaded that his crushing indirect taxation is paid by the producer, and not by the consumer!

ALICE BODINGTON.

BOOK REVIEWS.

PRINCIPES DE MORALE ET D'ÉDUCATION LAÏQUES. Ouvrage, publié par le comité d'études morales, sous les auspices et avec l'approbation du conseil central de la Fédération Française des Libres-Penseurs. Paris.

This book is a catechism of secular morality written at the suggestion of the universal congress of Freethinkers which met in Paris in 1889. The "Comité d'études morales" founded in 1890 under the presidency of Jean-Paul Cée (Paris) went to work and presents us now with this little volume which embodies their views and moral principles. The book is written in a country where the existing religions neither compromise nor develop. Hence religion means to the French freethinkers hostility to progress. This condition is the reason of an animosity against every thing that goes under the name of religion. This again is also the reason of a certain spirit of negation pervading the book. They are fighting still with errors and the bitterness of the fight is noticeable still in the pages of the book. Under present conditions this is natural, but we hope that the movement will gradually develop in positive strength, so that it will be enabled to leave the churches alone and become itself a religion, not a system of dogmas and ceremonials, or a belief in something supernatural, but a confidence in truth as a guide through life, which would be "the religion of science."

Aside from this objection, we are much pleased with the "Principes de moral et d'éducation laïques." It is written in a fluent and simple style as such a book ought to be and the material is arranged in a practical way. It begins with the definitions of "a free man" and "a free thinker." License is contrasted with liberty. Knowledge and belief are contrasted and it is maintained that the religions are in conflict with scientific truths. Belief in God is rejected as a fiction. The idea "God" however is not defined and it is a matter of course that it is taken in the sense of a supernatural personality. Everything supernatural is discarded. A soul that should constitute a personality distinct from the organism is not admitted to exist and with its existence also its immortality is denied. All these ideas the freethinker rejects, but "he places his trust in the principles contained in these three magic words": *Liberté, Egalité et Fraternité.*

The second part of the book treats of the moral law. "Ethics (*la morale*) comprises the knowledge, love, and practice of the good. . . . Ethics is the science of the duties based upon justice. . . . Ethics is not an arbitrary discipline imposed by some dogmatism, the truth of which is not demonstrated, it is a natural law. . . . Obedience to this law insures the conservation and progress of individuals as well as societies. We acquire ethical knowledge through a study of ourselves and of the universe. . . . Ethics is not dependent upon any dogma or religious ceremonial. . . . Our present generation is accustomed to regard certain religious dogmas as the pedestal of which ethics is the statue. Accordingly if the pedestal is overthrown, and this will come to pass, the statue will fall and break, and man will be without rule or law."

After these general explanations which in their positiveness please us much more than the mere negations of the first part, we enter into the details of moral principles. Right, duty, and liberty are shown to be correlative terms; whereupon a discussion follows of diverse virtues and vices. The third part treats of the subject of education, developing in detail the principles of physical, intellectual and moral education.

The book represents the ethical views of the freethinkers of France and is in this quality alone of importance. The Secular Union has published a work on the same subject and it would be well to compare both publications.

NOTES.

A study of the changes which theology undergoes is a good lesson to the laymen as well as to the clergy, and will open their eyes concerning dogmas and the infallibility of dogmas. *The Atlantic Monthly* for December contains a good article by Alexander V. G. Allen on "The Transition in New England Theology" which is interesting as well as instructive. It expounds the religious views of two men, of Jonathan Edwards and his disciple Dr. Samuel Hopkins. The former died in 1758, the latter lived to meet not only John Murray, the first preacher of Universalism, but also Channing, the apostle of a new conception of Christianity, less stern and more humane. Edwards was relentless in his denunciation of the Arminians, but, says Allen, he "was right in his main contention—that Arminianism was the solvent of the Calvinistic theology." There was the great problem of evil, and of God electing the one to salvation, the other to perdition. The Calvinist position is that "the Deity will not demean himself before man by rendering account or seeking to justify his procedure. With this doctrine Arminianism waged incessant warfare; the Arminian maintained that God's reason must be known."

Dr. Samuel Hopkins was less stern than his master and thus paved the way of progress, and the view he took is strange enough. He did not flinch from the conclusion that God was the author of evil and he maintained that both damnation as well as salvation were for the glory of God. His doctrine was "called the doctrine of disinterested benevolence or submission; man should be willing to be damned *in majorem Dei gloriam*,* and it is characteristic of Dr. Hopkins that he was willing himself to go to hell, and it is said that while other preachers usually feel sure of escaping that doom,—he never felt certain.

Dr. Hopkins, living in one of the centres of the slave trade, was one among the first who awoke to its evils and demanded a suppression of the traffic in human flesh. He was not an abolitionist, but he began a crusade which ended in abolitionism. Channing said that he was "grateful to the stern teacher [Dr. Hopkins] who had turned his thoughts and heart to the claims of impartial universal benevolence."

* Dr. Hopkins's view reminds us of Luther, who said: "This is the height of faith: to believe that he who saves so few and damns so many is most merciful; that he who places us among the damned as he pleases is most just, Says Erasmus: He seems to enjoy the torture of the unfortunate and to deserve more hatred than love. If I could, by the power of reason, understand how God, who shows so much wrath and malice, can possibly be merciful and just, I should have no need of faith."

MR. C. S. PEIRCE has resumed his lessons by correspondence in the Art of Reasoning, taught in progressive exercises. A special course in logic has been prepared for correspondents interested in philosophy. Terms, $30. for twenty-four lessons. Address: Mr. C. S. Peirce, "Avisbe," Milford, Pa.

THE OPEN COURT.

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY BY

THE OPEN COURT PUBLISHING CO.

TERMS THROUGHOUT THE POSTAL UNION:
$2.00 PER YEAR. $1.00 FOR SIX MONTHS.
AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND TASMANIA, $2,50 PER YEAR.

All communications should be addressed to
THE OPEN COURT,
(Nixon Building, 175 La Salle Street,)
P. O. DRAWER F. CHICAGO, ILL.

CONTENTS OF NO. 224.